



Rockport Millbrook Meadow Committee

P.O. Box 51, Rockport, MA 01966

www.millbrookmeadow.org

*Charmaine Blanchard
Marcia Lombardo, Treasurer
Aileen Morrissey
Frederick H. Tarr III*

*Samuel W. Coulbourn, Chair
Shannon Mason, Vice Chair
Barbara Sparks
Stephanie Woolf*

Minutes of Meeting Wednesday, January 14th, 2015 Trustees' Room, Rockport Public Library

7:00 p.m. Chairman **Sam Coulbourn** called the meeting to order. Members present: **Aileen Morrissey, Barbara Sparks, Charmaine Blanchard, Shannon Mason** and **Ted Tarr**. Also present were **Gunilla Caulfield**, Trustee of the Lura Hall Phillips Trust; **Eric Hutchins** and **Laura Hallowell**, Advisors to the RMMC; **Jim Gardner**, DPW Commissioner and **Toby Arsenian**. **Marcia Lombardo** and **Stephanie Woolf** were absent.

1. Introduction. Chairman Coulbourn introduced visitors. He noted that **John Raitt**, a neighbor to the Meadow, had just rebuilt the skaters' bench at the edge of Mill Pond. Charmaine had assisted John in obtaining permission to make the repairs, and she publicized his work on Facebook, which has drawn a lot of favorable comments.

2. Public input –There was none.

3. Committee Business

Treasurer's Report. Treasurer was absent.

Approval of bills. Since the Treasurer was not present Shannon asked for a vote to approve reimbursement to members for expenses in the recent fund-raising campaign. Members voted to reimburse charges incurred by Laura Hallowell at \$38.35 and Shannon \$9.80.

Approve Minutes. Members voted to approve the minutes of Dec. 10 and 17, 2014.

Future Meeting. Shannon noted that our November 2015 meeting will fall on Veterans' Day (Nov. 11) and proposed that it be moved to Wednesday, Nov. 18. Members voted to approve change.

4. Master Plan. Barbara reported that the final Master Plan will be issued by Milone & MacBroom (MMI) within one week.

5. Update status of Millbrook Meadow Restoration. A meeting is planned soon with the Director of Public Works to discuss the placement of ADA (handicap) parking spaces in or near the Meadow, and addition of design of a flood gate, to restrict inflow of beach flotsam during and after a storm. At that meeting the plan for designing a suitable entry to the park for maintenance vehicles will also be discussed. If an elaborate archway is installed at the Beach

Street entrance that might make it impracticable for DPW and other maintenance vehicles to enter. Barbara suggested that the arch might be over the pedestrian entrance, but agreed to call this to the attention of DPW and the Contractor. Barbara said she has asked the contractor for timelines for the actual construction.

a. Willows: Barbara reported that DPW will be contracting soon to remove the two old willows. We will be notified beforehand.

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b. Mill Brook: Related to construction plans, Toby, upon hearing about removal and rebuilding of the Mill Brook watercourse, warned that the contractor “not make off” with the granite.

c. Boardwalk: On the proposed boardwalk, Charmaine noted that she had seen a very nice boardwalk built with volunteer labor at a much lower cost than what is proposed for the Pond. Eric stated that the requirements for protecting wetlands are so stringent that any boardwalk will have to be carefully permitted and professionally built.

d. Invasive Plants: Laura told the MMC that the timeline for eliminating invasives in the Meadow and around the Pond was much longer than the expected time for construction, and if planting of the area after dredging and rebuilding of the Meadow and Brook is attempted before invasives are eliminated, they will surely cause a continuing problem. She stated that Jason Williams of MMI had told her that it would cost about \$3000 for the first year of treatment, and that it ought to start well before the start of construction. Now would be best, she said. The committee voted to start the treatment of the invasives in 2015. It would be handled as the expense for removing the willows is being handled.

6. DPW Contract with MMI: Barbara reported that she and Sam had met with Joe Parisi and Tim Olson of DPW on the upcoming Phase 3 Contract with MMI.

Eric addressed the contract for Phase 3 with MMI that is about to be signed. He stressed the importance of all MMC members looking at the contract and understanding it. He added that he found the portion relating to permitting “weak”, and related his long experience with this. He said it was important for Massachusetts Environmental Protection Agency (MEPA) and Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) to be made aware of this project sooner, rather than later. “The permitting authorities at this point know nothing about this project,” Eric added. “They should be informed.”

a. Liaison with DPW, others: Jim Gardner suggested that Eric meet with Joe Parisi and Tim Olson of DPW to ensure this permitting part be emphasized. Eric added that an archeologist will probably be required by MHC, and representatives of native tribes informed. [Note; Tim Olson later noted that all Army Corps of Engineers projects here require notification of the Wampanoag Tribe.]

Shannon suggested that we create a timeline for this period, to ensure that we inform the public and other organizations at critical juncture points.

7. Community Preservation submission. Barbara reported that she has been working on the narrative for the CPA application, and she, Sam and Frank Hassler had met and were working on a budget for requesting CPA funds. Laura offered to help with reviewing the application. Eric advised against having MMI at the CPC meeting, as it might imply that they, rather than MMC are calling the shots. We should know what it is we want and be able to explain it.

Jim Gardner said that he had served on the Community Preservation Committee and stated that they like a high degree of specificity. What are we (the Town) buying? Eric noted that there has been a 30% growth in costs for the project. Jim said that he has never seen CPC fully fund any request.

Toby suggested that we ask the Board of Selectmen to hold a joint meeting with CPC.

Sam asked Jim if he had any advice for MMC at this point.

8. Who Makes Design Choices? Jim said that there remains a question about design choices. Who makes the decision on different parts of this project, and when? Is everything already decided, or is there an opportunity for the public to comment and make recommendations? For instance, the curved concrete wall in the Brook (headwall)—who makes the decision on whether there will be a seating area there, or whether it will be faced with granite? “As you get closer to your meeting with CPC, more questions will arise. How will design choices be made, and when?” Jim asked. He said he thought that we have two choices, including the public in the meetings to develop our choices or making the choices ourselves and then trying to sell them to the public. The first method might build more support for the project and avoid battles at Town Meeting because people will have felt included.

Barbara responded that “The advantage of the MMC making the decisions and selling them to the public is that we would avoid lengthy re-design discussions (repeating what we've already been through) and we would provide Leadership, which is what a lot of people are looking for, and I see as our responsibility”.

Barbara added that we will have a series of public meetings and refine the design ideas. Jim advised: “You need to be explicit.”

Eric recommended “pre-permitting”. “This is where you go to other boards and committees and inform them and get their opinions.”

Jim added: “Establish dates for open meetings, specifically for design review.” Once you tell people the process, they may understand that at some point, the design becomes cast in concrete.

9. Fund Raising Sub-Committee, publicity and community outreach. Status of fundraising and grant research efforts. Shannon thanked Marcia, Laura, and Betsy Giannoccaro for discussions about the Bruce J. Anderson and PARC grant requests. The new Baker administration is still deciding on whether and how much to fund the PARC. We’ll know in April how much will be available. Charmaine added that for the B.J. Anderson, because ours is a large scale project, it may be helpful for us to request funds for one special piece. The Master Plan will be helpful for this. Eric added that historic preservation at this site is very important and we should concentrate on that. He advised that on any application, if we are refused, two weeks after we should request a debriefing. They don’t like this, but they’ll agree to debrief, and that can be helpful in re-applying.

10. Getting our message out. Laura reported that the Town web site has been improved, and it is now linked to the Conservancy site and vice versa. Shannon reported that we had sent an email “blast” out with details of the Master Plan to our Conservancy members (260) via MailChimp. Laura suggested that we do an article for the *Gloucester Daily Times* soon.

8. Request of Rockport Music for Opening Night Gala June 5, 2015.

Sam brought up the request by Rockport Music to install a tent (80' x 40') in the Meadow for a dinner for about 230 guests. He said that access to the Meadow via the pathway would remain open for the public.

Members asked questions about actual time of installation and removal of tent, placement of portable toilets, use of a portable generator and noise and light trespass associated with the event. Members expressed concern for abutters.

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Ted suggested that there was a real need for a written procedure for such requests.

Barbara stated that the portable toilets would be located in the adjacent parking lot, the cleanup from the event would be completed by 11 p.m. and the generator would be turned off by that time as well.

Members deadlocked in the vote to recommend approval, three for and three against.

Aileen suggested that since the vote was inconclusive we meet again next week, when we could learn more details about the request, have a chance to discuss it, and consider the matter again.

Shannon moved to meet next week. Ted seconded.

Sam said he would ask Rockport Music to send a representative who could explain the request and answer questions. Members voted unanimously to meet again on January 21, 2015. Shannon said she would reserve a room and post the meeting.

11. New Business. None.

12. Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 21, 2015 at Trustees' Room, Rockport Public Library.

13. Next Regular Meeting will be Wednesday, February 11, 2015.

14. Adjourn 10:03 p.m.

Approved:

Samuel W. Coulbourn

**Copy to: Town Administrator; Director of Public Works; Conservancy Board and Advisors ;
Conservation Agent ; DPW Commissioners; and Jason Williams, MMI**